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Province of
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Legislative Assembly



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An open letter to Kathy Eichenberger, Project Assessment Director,
BC Environmental Assessment Office:

It has come to my attention that AXOR has recently submitted the required documents to supplement their application for a private power project on Glacier and Howser creeks in the Kootenay region of British Columbia.

Although I hope that the BC Minister of Environment will use his authority to stop this project in its tracks, should that not happen I am writing this letter to you in your role as the Project Assessment Director. I understand that AXOR's application will be vetted by the Project Working Group, and that group will then determine if the application moves forward to the public consultation phase. This being the case, I have three important requests regarding the public consultation process as you consider the application:

A formal public meeting is held in Nelson, BC. AXOR's previous refusal to hold a meeting in Nelson caused anger and frustration to local people dealing with transportation and access issues. While a 2 hour drive from the proposed site, Nelson is home to a significant number of businesses, organizations and stakeholders who rely on the areas proposed for AXOR's development. As MLA, I responded to the public demand by organizing an informational meeting on the proposed project and its possible impacts. More than 500 concerned citizens attended, demonstrating that a meeting in Nelson is warranted.

*The period for public consultation last the maximum number of allowable days (75) under the **Environmental Assessment Act: PUBLIC CONSULTATION POLICY REGULATION** and people are well informed of the opportunities and ways to contribute to the public input portion of the application.* During the summer of 2009, the public was given 45 days to become informed, have a dialogue and provide feedback on AXOR's second submission for a Glacier-Howser private power project. This short time period was cumbersome and difficult for the public to do due diligence. Additionally, I received an exceptional number of questions from the public about how best to make their voice heard; it was clear that this basic information was not sufficiently forthcoming from the proponent, nor the Province. For a meaningful region-wide dialogue, the public must have sufficient time and knowledge about the process.

An independent source synthesize the information regarding and contained within the application into an executive summary which highlights the key points of the project and is translated from technical jargon into common language. Not surprisingly, people felt that the 7000 page document was far too cumbersome to read and comprehend. So that the public can offer comprehensive feedback, they need to have tangible information.

Ultimately, I am asking that this process be transparent and accessible to the general public. I trust that you will find these requests in the best interests of democracy and the public.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michelle Mungall". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large, sweeping flourish at the end.

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